

SPRING GOBBLER SURVEY COMMENTS 2020

WEATHER

Good: 2957

Bad or not very good: 9999, 0753, 6373, 3244, 9880, 5186, 7341, 9580

Warm: 1831, 6373 4689, 3508

Cold spring: 1267, 4756, 9999, 3508, 1784, 1647, 6415, 9161, 8964, 3673, 0584, 1831, 9999, 6373, 1232, 3217, 1964, 0572, 4463, 8428

Rainy: 1755, 9999, 0244, 9146, 8511, 8041, 9999, 5468, 0713, 3217, 0572, 0406, 1793, 9999, 9327, 5992, 7341, 7788, 5884, 0198, 1007, 6406, 9580, 9327, 5992, 4689, 6164, 1482, 0198, 5927, 8428

Windy: 8964, 1548, 1755, 9999, 9146, 8511, 4796, 5468, 6377, 0573, 4340, 9999, 7181, 1647, 9161, 6406, 9999, 7341, 7788, 4689, 6164, 0198, 0172, 5927, 0850

Unusual weather: 0454, 9999

Fog: 8964

Frost: 1158

Snow: 1158, 3810, 5245

Worst Weather: 7868, 1877, 8511

GOBBLING

Good: 2626, 6337

Fair: 6415

Poor: 8967, 6771, 9146, 9999, 1964, 6063, 1647 4517, 8857

Less than before: 1755, 9999, 6644, 3566, 1111, 0584, 0454, 1232, 0840, 0198, 4735, 5927,

Gobbled on roost then not on ground: 0889, 2626, 9401, 4796, 3432, 4517, 6239, 4463, 0892

Gobbling by multiple birds on roost: 2626

Gobbled on ground: 3508

Gobbled very little: 9999, 3057, 0543

Gobbling good in pre-season: 7341, 8854, 2090, 1470

Gobbled sporadic: 9999

Toms silent coming in: 1111, 9999

Gobbling by jakes good on ground: 4689

Gobbled good first week: 0244, 4391

Gobbling none entire season: 1963, 9161, 9999

Gobbled far away: 4336

Gobbled good first 10 days: 8041, 8428

Gobbled less at end of season: 7341, 0072, 4391, 8428

Gobbled more at end of season: 8041, 9327, 5321, 4450

Gobbled none last 2 weeks: 0454

Gobbled almost every day: 0753

Gobbled in evening: 9327

Gobbling by many gobblers first day: 1768

POPULATION

Population down or low: 9495, 1844, 6644, 9146, 9999, 6972, 1232, 4340, 3316, 2929
6918, 9401, 4735, 0850
Lots of jakes: 2052, 9999, 9999, 4689, 1717
Few jakes: 8511, 6972, 3316, 2967, 7191
Few gobblers: 8511, 1717, 4842, 0072
Populations OK: 1927
Population increasing: 3800, 7341, 8428
Population decreasing: 2929, 9846, 8646, 9999, 0543, 9024
Very few or not many hens: 7868, 8511, 3316, 3217, 1964
More gobblers and jakes than hens: 1007, 8428
More hens than gobblers: 4842
Few 2 year olds: 1755

SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Need column for jakes: 2052, 5992, 3053
Did not receive survey at start of season: 1784
Not enough space for comments: 4391
Not enough room to record on form: 9146
Wind response should include (light): 3053
Did not get calendar for doing survey: 1305
Would like Internet or Cell Phone survey: 1131, 0957
Liked survey: 1339, 6415, 8428

LIKED SEASON OR NOT

Enjoyed the season: 2929, 8428
Good season: 9337, 9495, 2959, 9880, 1927, 9602
Difficult: 6664, 8680, 9999, 6337, 1482, 9024
Worst Season: 1002, 4741, 4340, 6352, 6406, 3879, 8854
Any season is great good or bad: 0347

THANK YOU

Thanks Gary Norman and have a great retirement: 7868, 5599, 4644, 1706, 6771, 2626,
2052, 4455, 6415, 5469, 6161, 9999, 0151, 0753, 7181, 3508, 9161, 9160, 2370, 6202,
4517, 8646, 7341, 3458, 5321, 4559, 9072, 0337, 1852, 8428
Thanks Gary Norman, VDGIF & NWTF: 5599
Thanks VDGIF: 0347, 6161, 4499, 1831, 1241, 8428, 6951, 4948
Good luck Katie Martin: 0584, 6415, 0151, 9072
Good turkey management plan: 6415, 5615
VGDIF is doing a great job for disabled veterans: 6415

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Baiting, road hunting & trespassing in Bedford County: 4391
Saw hunter with decoy 50 yards from road on National Forest: 2390
Found with hen breast cut out on 4-25, suspect poaching: 1339
Trespassing and poaching: 4340
Guides help hunters trespass: 4391
Lots of trespassing, becoming dangerous: 1896
CPOs need to come to Cavalier WMA, too many trucks & 4 wheeling: 9089
Poacher put turkey carcass at blind before season: 4340
Need more CPOs: 3458
Called game commission 3 times about hunters running in on us while working bird on National Forest: 7612
General Assembly needs to increase CPO pay like State Police: 6415
Little poaching where I live: 6415
Hunter carry multiple licenses: 6951
God help poacher if I catch him before CPO: 4340
More enforcement needed: 4340
Little hunting interest since current CPO assigned: 9999
Hunter have negative opinions of CPO where I live: 9999
Fewer CPOs contribute to game law violations: 9999
More outlaw behavior than I have seen in 30-40 years: 4340
Hunters killing over limit: 6951
Caught man hunting on posted property in Albemarle Co. from Green Co.: 0929
Heard 20 minutes of pistol fire one day: 9089
Hunting before season: 4040

HUNTER PRESSURE AND CHECK IN SYSTEM

More hunters this season: 3432, 1232, 4340, 6363, 5695, 9999, 6771, 5469, 0151, 3244, 5186, 9401, 9999
Fewer hunters this season: 9999, 6415, 0543
Hunting pressure low on GW National Forest: 1964
Hunting pressure low on private land: 6415, 8428
Hunting pressure should be high this year with people off from work: 9777
Public land pressure high: 6889, 3356
A lot of uneducated hunters off from work: 6664
A lot of hunting pressure during the week due to COVID: 5599, 9999, 0850, 9401

DOGS

No running deer dogs in Big Woods WMA in fall till November 30: 5339
Dogs running in places where prohibited: 4595
Dogs let loose on our property Friday, Saturday and Sunday: 4463
Dogs ran deer around blind for 1 hour: 9072

LENGTH OF DAY HUNTING AND SUNDAY

Sunday hunting on all lands and not just private land: 5615, 5339, 0332
No to Sunday hunting: 9999, 6951, 5434
All day hunting one week earlier: 5032
Dislikes all day hunting: 5615, 5434, 8428
Hunt all day full season: 2090, 4450, 9846, 3508, 1193, 6577, 3080
Allow hunting to 1 PM: 5615, 5434
Open all day hunting one week earlier: 5302
3 weeks of all day hunting: 0198
Yes to Sunday hunting: 8428

SEASON DATES

Open 1 week earlier: 3437, 1470, 6771, 6951, 5434
Open 1-2 weeks earlier: 9580, 7825, 9395
Open 2 weeks earlier: 3611, 5468
Open season 2 weeks later: 2390
Open earlier: 2090, 9999, 1305, 9072
Need later opening date: 5469
End season 1 week earlier: 6771
End season 1 week longer: 3800, 9395
End season 2 weeks earlier: 7825
Leave season as is: 2193, 5599, 5615, 5122 7341, 8428
Start season earlier and end earlier: 3053
4 week season: 6951
Move season to permit more breeding time: 0322
Season should be 1-30 April: 0244

FALL SEASON

Fall season too long: 9160, 9024
Keep fall season: 4499, 6631
Too many fall turkeys shot: 4391
One fall turkey tag: 6918
Increase fall season: 9395
Reduce fall season: 8947, 7868, 4340
No overlap of turkey in muzzle loader and general firearms season: 6631, 6664
Fall season frustrating with openings and closings: 2589
No fall season in Augusta Co. 0472
Shorten season in fall and simplify: 1470
End hunting hens in fall: 5469, 3280
January season a great idea: 6631

LIMITS AND LICENSE

Limit is good: 0957, 6415, 8428
License expensive for non residents: 8428
Cut limit back to 2: 7868, 7342, 2952, 6972 1171, 9401, 2390
Limit in spring to 2 birds: 6918
Limit to 2 birds a day: 3138, 3080
Limit to one gobbler a season: 4595
Limit to two birds in spring: 6951
3 to 2 gobblers in spring: 0332
Regulations OK: 2193, 1831, 6415
Reduce bag limit till population improves: 9815
Reduce Bag limits to 1 or 2: 4340
No hens year round: 7868
Consider separate turkey tag: 0332

WEAPONS AND SHOT

Do not allow rifles in spring: 0957, 1755, 5599, 0332, 6664, 6161, 4333, 8428
No rifles allowed for hunting turkeys: 2193, 7342, 6951, 1171, 9401, 3458, 0198, 4644
Allow rifles in spring: 9999, 4756, 4520, 9815, 4952
Likes combination gun: 6415, 2050

FANNING

No to fanning: 6664, 3458, 8428
No tail fans for decoys: 7342

OTHER ANIMALS

Saw black squirrel: 4559
Bear responded to turkey call within 3 yards: 4756
Saw 4 bear: 0256
Coyote came to hen call: 0889
No Whip-O-Wills: 8718
Heard Whip-O-Wills: 1339, 2719, 7670, 9161,
Lots of Whip-O-Wills: 7788, 4595
Saw large red fox stalking rabbit: 9999
Saw multiple bobcats stalking turkeys: 9742
Gobbler strutting in March on game camera: 9742
50 Percent success rate on gobblers or me and partner: 2959
Saw bear footprints in dirt along Rt 60 and 45: 9999
Lower mass crop and fewer turkeys: 9495
Bear ran toward gobbler and shut him up: 9880
No grouse heard: 8964
Too many coyotes and predators: 1963, 9999, 1548, 0437, 3217

Saw scarlet tanager: 9999
Humming bird bounced off hat while calling: 7788
Saw 2 bear cubs on Mother's Day: 2390
Red tailed hawk tried to catch hen: 3810
Heard grouse and saw bear: 8428
Killed coyote: 3280, 5302
Foxes and Coyotes with mange: 6161
Lots of coyotes: 4842, 0347, 3217
Heard coyotes in Lancaster Co: 2959
More deer and bear in Botetort Co: 8428
Saw black bird chasing bald eagle: 4948
Killed coyote that spooked gobbler: 9999
Coyotes killing hens on nest: 1831
Eagle in Floyd Co: 9580
Lots of woodpeckers: 5469
Saw 36 birds and 5 strutting in Madison County on 2-28: 8041
Jake tried to mate with decoy: 1831
3rd bird had tail injury probably from predator: 7670
Dick Cross WMA overran with coyotes: 8716
Minimal mosquitos: 2959
Called in bobcat to 10 feet: 3208
2 to 3 red fox along road: 4948
Called in and killed bearded hen: 2589
Found 4 point antler shed: 5337
Coyote went to gobbler while gobbling: 9999
Saw bald eagle: 7788
Coyote came in yelping: 1442
Saw possum trying to catch Whip-O Will: 7837
Saw possum 2 days in row: 5339
Heard first quail in Horse Pen WMA: 6889
Saw pair of woodpeckers: 5339
Saw 300 to 400 pound bear and gobbler came in later: 7745
Called in owl: 6239
Few grouse: 8766
Lots of hawks: 7788
More coyotes on Cow Knob: 3800
Saw bear: 8428
Healthy squirrel population: 8428

OPINIONS

Low mass crop and fewer turkeys: 9495
Looking for winners of turkey contest: 2859
Mating started early: 8428, 0454
Log on National Forest to create better habitat: 0332
Killed triple bearded gobbler in Buckingham Co: 4499

Virus affected my hunting: 3566, 6918, 2719, 2390, 9269, 1158, 5526, 2370, 9401, 2198, 5760, 9999 4735, 9602

More people hunting due to virus: 6373, 3432, 1442

Virus allowed me to hunt more: 5927

Opening day of muzzle loader is a farce should be general firearms: 0905

Saw coyote with something black in mouth: 9999

Trap predators: 3316

A lot of gobblers I saw in March disappeared in season: 6406

I only saw 3-4 year olds, jakes and no 2 year olds: 2589

Saw long beard attack jake: 5321

Did not hunt much due to health concerns: 9999

Saw gobbler with 12 inch beard in yard:

Management should focus on quality spring hunting: 8947

Populations seems to be down in eastern part of state: 9999

Coyotes affect turkey populations: 0892

Gobblers are wise to coyotes: 0892

Most mating in March and early April: 3673

Change regulation to bearded gobblers and not bearded hens: 6664

Lot of young turkey last week of season: 6771

Killed first multiple beard bird: 1755

Saw mostly toms: 2629

Bad weather had little to do with season: 0543

Saw big gobbler 3 times: 2039

Farm planted in wheat and no open areas: 2672

86 years old and drove 80 miles to hunt: 2672

79 years old and thrill to set in woods: 9999

Public land in south side is awful: 5467

Found quarts of morels: 8964

Lot of hawks: 7788

Volunteer as a Hunter Ed Instructor: 1131

Set hunting season to increase populations: 1964

No turkeys on Hardware WMA: 6889

Gobblers move from day to day: 4517

Coyote ruined hunt: 8854

Called in 5 gobblers on 4-16: 9999

Coyotes change the way turkeys act: 1896

Saw 7 hens fly off roost 5 miles from VA on 4-16: 3566

Killed 2 gobblers with 1.5 inch spurs and 22.5 pounds: 1927

Kentucky suspended non residents: 3566

Saw hen fly in tree 30 yards and putt for 10-15 minutes: 9336

Large hunter turnout in Big Woods WMA and Parkers Branch: 5339

Season early due to mild winter: 1647

Need better habitat in GWNF: 1964

Coyotes keep gobblers and hens depressed: 1784

Several woodcock: 3217

Gobblers weighed more this year due to mild winter: 4499

Introduced decoys to several hunters and less effective: 4689
Birds decoy shy: 5404
Saw 2 box turtles mating: 7825
Coyotes affecting gobblers: 1111
Gobblers strutted but no gobbling: 5404
Passed on 4 jakes in 2019 and 2020 very active 2 year olds: 1844
Daughter killed first gobbler, 21 Pound, 4 Ounce: 0957
Red tailed hawk dived n decoy: 9999
Let gobbler walk at 12:10 PM on National Forest: 1031
Took 21 ½ pound gobbler with 2 ½ inch beard and 1 inch spurs: 7191
Turkeys with hens longer: 1482
Saw dead jake: 9161
Eliminate shooting turkeys off roost: 1513
Killed hen in 80's with 8 ¼ inch beard: 1002
Flushed hen with poults: 4408
Mother got sick second day and could only hunt afternoons: 4408
Gobblers afraid to gobble due to coyotes: 5404
Hunting partner injured and unable to hunt: 0533
I no longer hunt alone due to age and health: 0573
Saw hen with poults on May 10 to 16th: 3080
Declining turkey population in Grayson Co: 7868
Gobblers social distancing and wearing mask: 9999
First time in 36 years I did not harvest gobbler: 8646
Only hunted 1 day due to work: 8668
Takes 6 minutes 45 seconds to check in bird or deer: 5434
A lot of bikers and hikers on National Forest: 0840
Mushroom hunter interrupted my hunt: 1158
Gobbler mating with hen in evening of May 14: 5434
Weather may have affected gobblers: 3057
2 hens flew off roost: 1023
Don't like decoys: 6951
Called in bearded hen in Richmond Co: 2959
Missed shot with red dot loose and brain malfunction: 8507
Lot of wounded birds by deer hunters buckshot: 6951
Birds gobbled on ground only for 3 days: 9999
Hunted Ft Pickett late in season: 3356
Killed gobbler with 3 buckshot in chest meat no good: 6951
Gobbler had beard rot: 7766
Saw a Fisher in Frederick Co: 5245
Lots of quail: 7766
Gobblers late to come off roost: 1267
Hens wit gobblers till after lunch: 1267
Saw flock of 7 turkeys last day: 3437
Saw ringneck pheasant: 0957
Saw bald eagle: 0957
Seemed breeding season was over by youth weekend: 4952
Took friend hunting on last day and heard one: 4952

Gobblers with hens all season: 2390
Gobblers practiced social distancing: 5593
Turkey ran from caller: 2370
Limited times I could hunt: 9999
Little hunting this season, hunted 4 western states: 4189
Saw hen gobble: 0256
Saw hen with beard: 0256
Protect hens in low populated areas: 4340
Hens with gobblers entire season: 5884
3 jakes darted in front of truck on way home: 0957
2 toms came in at 15 minutes past noon and danced around decoy: 0957
Early spring: 5186
Why all questions not involving turkeys: 6577
Could not get to good spots due to high river water: 7788
Many nest lost due to rain: 5884
Called in jake on 4-11 and let him walk and 5-7 missed jake: 9999

YOUTH DAY

Need more youth programs: 9999
Apprentice day is awesome: 1183
Have youth day last Saturday of March: 1305
Took 10 year old grandson on youth day or worked birds for 1 hour: 5337
Tried to get 12 year old his first gobbler, heard and saw a lot: 9336
10 year old almost got gobbler: 3508
2 kids and 2 gobblers and a citation rainbow: 0256
Get more youth involved: 6577, 8428
Called in gobbler for daughter but was no tin range: 44391
Son was a shooter for a while and now a hunter on 4/11/20: 9161
Start season all week and no youth day: 9999
Ticks, mosquitos, snakes terrible: 5434
Hidden Valley has no turkeys: 0572

NESTING

Found 3 broken eggs no nest: 1023
Hen flushed with 11 eggs in nest on 4/11/20: 1852
Hens set early on nest: 9999
Hen flushed off nest on April 15th with 12 eggs: 1852
No hens flushed off nest by 7-8 buddies: 66344
Good hatch in Rockbridge: 8766
Hen flushed off nest on 22 April with 12 eggs: 9880
Possibly late nesting: 3566
3 hens on nest: 8428

RECOMMENDATIONS

Stock turkeys in Clinch Mountain and hidden valley: 0572

Fund South West VA like Northern VA: 0572

Hidden Valley closed the last two day due to gypsy moth spraying: 0572

Add fall tag for a fee: 3080

Charge a fee for WMAs: 5339

Allow lottery or quota for WMAs due to overcrowding: 1183

Run fall turkey and deer concurrently: 2589

Need more management in state forest: 3280

Reduce number of buck allowed west of Blue Ridge or state wide: 8831

Manage trophy bucks like Ohio does and increase hunters: 8831

Shorten season in Frederick and Shenandoah Counties:

Prescribed burns hurt turkey population: 0543

Improve habitat on public lands in western part of state: 9999

Habitat need improving and less clear cutting: 0198